

Prepare Thy Heart

Vidor, TX 2/21/72
Bridge City 8/16/81
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Anahae TX 6/24/90 2/22/98 9/1/01 KSHN 8/4/02

PREPARE THY HEART --Ezra 7:10

Introduction:

- Preparation is necessary for success. Cf. Football team, (practice sessions); child in school, etc.
- Would be foolish for the farmer to plant his seed upon unplowed ground --Cf. Luke 8:5
- It is not an accident when people succeed.

I. ONE MUST PREPARE THEIR HEART TO PLEASE JEHOVAH:

- How strange it is that people understand this in every area, except religion. Far too many feel no need to prepare the heart to serve God.
- Heart--Intellect, mind, our attitude must be prepared--effort expended. PREPARATION.
- This is why many do not enjoy the worship--they make no preparation, hit and miss affair.
- Ezra 7:10--Ezra had prepared his heart....
- Mt 6:33--Seek ye first kingdom of God-- ALL ELSE MUST BE SECONDARY, MUST HAVE A SINCERE DESIRE TO PLEASE GOD.
- Why is it that God's Word means so LITTLE to some people?? They have no desire for it!!!

II. PREPARATION---WHAT NEXT???

- May one stop after they make up their mind to make the heart prepared?? OBVIOUS THAT WE MUST PREPARE THE HEART TO DO SOMETHING:
- Ezra 7:10--"TO SEEK THE LAW OF THE LORD."
- "Seek"--desire, effort, longing, actively searching
- Ps. 1:2--Delight is in the law of the Lord.....etc Ps 119:16,24,47,72,97,103,104,
How does my attitude toward God's Word compare with the Psalmist's??
- Our seeking God MUST BEGIN WITH GOD'S LAW.
- But there is something else: THERE IS EFFORT. It takes work to learn God's Will.
MEDITATING DAY AND NIGHT. UPON GOD'S WORD.
- 2 Tim 2:15--Study to show thyself approved..... No room for laziness, takes diligent effort.
Heb 11:6--of them that DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.
No half-heart effort here.
- SEEK WHAT?? THE LAW OF THE LORD.
We put much effort into many things: Do we"study newspapers, magazines, trash, etc. while ignoring God's Word? How much time do YOU spend in THE BIBLE???
- Some can name each player on NFL teams, but couldn't tell you the apostles names.
From tee to green--but not plan of salvation

Every bush on the lake--organization of church soap-box operas--qualities of godly woman.

- Psalmist delighted in God's statutes. SWEET.

III. Ezra 7:10--TO DO IT.

- A PREPARED HEART; SEEK THE WORD OF GOD: THEN....
- ONE MUST DO GOD'S WORD.
- Jas 1:22-25; Matt 7:24,26
- Not enough to hear a lesson on evangelism--DO IT Must do more than hear about giving--must do it. Must do more than hear about study--must do it. Visiting the sick--MUST DO IT. Worshipping regularly--MUST DO IT.
- Oh, so many hear, but do not practice
- Ezekiel had that problem--Ezek 33:31-32. BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD--NOT HEARERS ONLY.

IV. Ezra 7:10--TEACH THE WORD.

- Heart prepared, seeking Word, Doing it, yet more.
- We are to be TEACHERS OF THE WORD.
- Sharing our knowledge with others.
- If you rejoice in the Lord--tell others about it Do you hope in the gospel--share the good news. See others in spiritual danger--warn with Word.
- Ps 119:13, 46--
- Acts 8:4--As Saul persecuted--scattered, preaching Would we teach the word if we were persecuted? Shall our peaceful existence excuse us??

CONCLUSION:

- Ezra 7:10--the way to successful service to God
 - (1) Prepare the heart
 - (2) Seek God's Will
 - (3) Do It
 - (4) Teach it.
- ARE WE SERVING GOD SUCCESSFULLY?
How about your heart??? Your attitude??? Are you honestly seeking God's will. Have you obeyed primary commandments??? As a child of God, are you teaching??